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ABSTRACT

In response to the educational trend of using online resources, this digest provides a list of 19 selected online resources most likely to help educators plan and design their curricula. Preparation of the digest began with a retrospective view of language arts-related questions received over the last 5 years by the reference staff of the ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading, English, and Communication. This was followed by defining six categories of frequently asked questions: (1) professional organizations; (2) national research and development centers and other federally funded projects; (3) listservs and online discussion groups; (4) online journals; (5) children's literature; and (6) lesson plans. Finally, using the digest "Guidelines for Evaluating Web sites" (Abdullah, 1998), Web sites were selected for each of the six categories. (NKA)

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Online Resources for K-12 Teachers: Language and Literacy Education

ERIC Digest

By

R. Stephen Stroup

ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading, English, and Communication

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Online Resources for K-12 Teachers: Language and Literacy Education

By R. Stephen Stroup

The use of online resources in education has grown rapidly since the late 1990s. A survey (Wujcik, 2000) investigating Internet use among 30,200 public schools in the United States during the school year 1999-2000 revealed that 94% of America's elementary and secondary schools have Internet access. In addition, more than 60% of schools report that their teachers make use of the Internet for instructional purposes (Wujcik, 2000). In response to this educational trend, we have selected a list of online resources we believe most likely to help educators plan and design their curriculum. Preparation of this Digest began with a retrospective review of language arts-related questions received over the last five years by the Reference Staff of the ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading, English, and Communication. Six categories of frequently asked questions were then defined: (1) professional organizations, (2) national research and development centers and other federally funded projects, (3) listservs and online discussion groups, (4) online journals, (5) children's literature, and (6) lesson plans. Finally, using *Guidelines for Evaluating Websites* (Abdullah, 1998), we selected the following websites for each of these categories.

1. Professional Organizations

In this section, we highlight websites that inform educators of issues and news in the field of language and literacy education, and that also provide a variety of resources teachers can use to advance their careers and skills.

International Reading Association (IRA)
http://www.reading.org/
Founded in 1956, the International Reading Association seeks to promote the following three goals: (1) promoting high levels of literacy for all by improving the quality of reading instruction through studying the reading processes and teaching techniques, (2) serving as a clearinghouse for the dissemination of reading research through conferences, journals, and other publications, and (3) actively encouraging the lifetime reading habit.

National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)
http://www.ncte.org
The National Council of Teachers of English has been dedicated to improving the teaching and learning of English and the language arts at all levels of education since its creation in 1911. It provides a forum for the profession, an array of opportunities for teachers to continue their professional growth throughout their careers, and a framework for cooperation in dealing with issues that affect the teaching of English.

National Reading Conference (NRC)
http://nrc.oakland.edu/
NRC is a professional organization for individuals who share an interest in reading research and the dissemination of information about literacy and literacy instruction.

2. National Research and Development Centers and Other Federally Funded Projects

Several national research and development centers inform educators of current policies and legislation related to language arts instruction. The researchers in these institutions conduct studies that support government efforts to promote literacy development for all.

Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement (CIERA)
http://www.ciera.org/index.html
CIERA's mission is to improve the early reading achievement of American children by generating and disseminating theoretical, empirical, and practical solutions to persistent problems in the learning and teaching of beginning reading.

Center on English Learning and Achievement (CELA)
http://cela.albany.edu/
CELA is a national center funded by the U.S. Department of Education to conduct research dedicated to gaining knowledge to improve students' English and literacy achievement in schools across America.

National Reading Panel (NRP)
http://www.nationalreadingpanel.org/
The NRP was established in 1997 at the request of Congress to convene a national panel to assess the effectiveness of different approaches used to teach children to read.

The Reading Pathfinder (RP)
http://www.readingpath.org/
The Reading Pathfinder is funded by the U.S. Department of Education. It identifies and presents resources that answer the literacy-related questions of parents and educators working with children.

3. Listservs and Online Discussion Groups

Listservs and online discussion groups provide educators with a vehicle for exchanging teaching ideas as well as gaining new information and resources from each other.

Center on English Learning & Achievement Discussion Board
http://205.232.130.2:8080/~2/retry
CELA's discussion board addresses students' abilities to read and write well, to think about the information they receive from any source, and to then communicate their knowledge and thoughts to others.

CIERA Forums: Online Discussion Boards
http://www.ciera.org/ciera/forums/index.html
CIERA's forums provide parents and educators a site on which to discuss today's important issues with other supporters of opportunities for literacy development for America's children.

NCTE's Conversations: Lists
http://www.ncte.org/lists/
This site hosts a number of email lists from NCTE. Many of them are specialized, created for use by small groups focused on particular tasks and projects.

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4. Online Journals

Free online journals provide ready access for educators who are interested in advancing their profession, understanding the most current research trends, and putting theory into practice.

Journal of Literacy Research (JLR)
http://www.coe.uga.edu/jlr/
Journal of Literacy Research, published quarterly by National Reading Conference, is an interdisciplinary journal publishing research related to literacy, language, and schooling from preschool through adulthood.

Language and Literacy
http://educ.queensu.ca/~landl/
A joint venture between Faculties of Education at Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario and the University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, *Language and Literacy* is an on-line journal for educators interested in a broad range of literacy issues encompassing research and teaching in multimedia, print, and oracy.

Reading Online (ROL)
http://readingonline.org/
Reading Online is a peer-reviewed journal published by the International Reading Association about K-12 practice and research in the field of reading and literacy education.

Threshold Project
http://www.ncte.org/threshold/
NCTE's *Threshold Project* provides online access to articles about the language arts, literacy practice, theory, research and a vast array of other subjects that have appeared in NCTE journals.

5. Children's Literature

Children's literature plays a critical role in the language arts curriculum. Sipe (1997) argues that children's literature can serve as a tool for developing a variety of literacy abilities as well as the enabler for literary understanding. The website below is developed and maintained by the reference staff at ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading, English, and Communication to help teachers design literature-based curriculum and also advance their knowledge in the field of children's literature.

Children's Literature Online Resources
http://eric.indiana.edu/comatt/childlit.html
From ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading, English, and Communication, this site provides collections of links including the following categories: (1) Authors and Illustrators, (2) Resources for Writing and Illustrating Children's Books, (3) Book Prizes, (4) Book Reviews, (5) Lesson Plans; (6) Organizations, Associations, and Societies, (7) Individual Homepages on Children's and Adolescent Literature, (8) Publishers and Children's Bookstores, (9) Online Children's Stories, (10) Online Children's Magazines, (11) Online Journals on Children's Literature, (12) Special Library Collections, (13) Syllabi on Teaching Children's and Adolescent Literature, and (14) Online Discussion Groups.

6. Lessons Plans and Teaching Methods

A survey, entitled "Hot Spots: Picks of Language Arts Websites" (Lu & Abdullah, 1999), investigated the information needs of educators in the United States. It found that the most useful websites are those providing an array of practical teaching ideas and methods. For this section, we selected three websites that provide lesson plan ideas and materials for learners of different age groups that will meet teachers' instructional needs.

AskERIC Lesson Plans and Resources
http://ericir.syr.edu/Search/simple.shtml
AskERIC is a personalized internet-based service providing education information to teachers, librarians, counselors, administrators, parents, and anyone interested in education throughout the United States and the world.

The Gateway to Educational Materials: Language Arts Lesson Plans
http://www.thegateway.org/SubjectBrowse.htm#language_arts
The Gateway to Educational Materials is a consortium dedicated to providing educators with quick and easy access to thousands of educational resources found on various federal, state, university, non-profit, and commercial Internet sites.

Internet School Library Media Center's English/Language Arts Lesson Plans
http://falcon.jmu.edu/~ramseyil/lesson.htm#B
Sponsored by James Madison University, this page linking to more than forty English language arts lesson plan sites focuses on specific topics for teachers, school librarians, and college students.

A comprehensive list of online resources for language arts teachers can be found at the following website: *Literacy Education Resources—Early Childhood to High School.*
http://eric.indiana.edu/comatt/litedres.html

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